

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a visual representation of the consequences of taking an action, comprising:

first moving a cursor in response to input from a user;

first detecting a position of said cursor within an application window; and

in response to said position of said cursor corresponding to a first selectable item within said application window, displaying a depiction of a consequence of actually selecting said first selectable item, wherein said first selectable item is not a representation of a file, wherein said ~~display~~ displaying a depiction of a consequence of actually selecting said first selectable item includes displaying a preview of ~~[[a]]~~ an actual consequence of selecting said first selectable item, and wherein said actual consequence of actually selecting said first selectable item includes an operation that is performed on a file that is open in a computer program presenting said first selectable item, and wherein said displaying a depiction is performed in the absence of an actual selection of said first selectable item.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

second moving a cursor in response to input from a user;

second detecting a position of said cursor; and

in response to said position of said cursor no longer corresponding to said first selectable item within said application window, discontinuing said displaying a depiction of a consequence of selecting said first selectable item.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

second moving a cursor in response to input from said user;

second detecting a position of said cursor within said application window; and

in response to said position of said cursor corresponding to a second selectable item within said application window, displaying a consequence of selecting said second selectable item.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said displaying a depiction of a consequence of selecting said first selectable item comprises displaying a result of selecting said first selectable item in a way that is visually altered as compared to a display in response to an actual selection of said first selectable item.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said displaying comprises displaying as a transparent overlay.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 5, wherein said transparent overlay comprises an alpha-blended rendering.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said displaying comprises displaying as a stencil outline.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said step of displaying is further in response to said cursor remaining within an area corresponding to said selectable item for at least a first period of time.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said selectable item comprises at least one of a menu item, an icon, and a button.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
detecting a selection of said first selectable item;

in response to said detecting a selection said first selectable item, displaying a consequence of selecting said first selectable item, wherein an appearance of said depiction of a consequence of selecting said selectable item is different than an appearance of said consequence of selecting said selectable item.

12. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein said method is performed with respect to a graphical user interface.

13. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein said displayed depiction comprises a depiction of at least one of a submenu, or sub-window.

14. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising;
after said displaying a depiction of a consequence of selecting said selectable item, in response to a position of said cursor no longer corresponding to said selectable item, discontinuing said displaying a depiction of a consequence of selecting said selectable item.

15. (Original) The method of Claim 1, further comprising;
displaying an indication of a relationship between said selectable item and said depiction of a consequence of selecting said selectable item.

16. (Original) The method of Claim 15, wherein said indication of a relationship between said selectable item and said depiction of a consequence of selecting said selectable item comprises a projection line.

17. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method, comprising:
determining a position of a cursor; and
in response to said position of said cursor hovering over a first selectable item, displaying a preview of [[a]] an actual consequence of actually selecting said first selectable item, wherein [[a]] an actual selection of said first selectable item performs an operation on a file that is open within an application that provides said first selectable item.

18. (Original) The method of Claim 17, further comprising;
second determining a position of said cursor; and
in response to said cursor no longer hovering over said first selectable item, discontinuing said depicting a consequence of selecting said first selectable item.

19. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 18, wherein said discontinuing is performed in the absence of a user selection of a second selectable item for discontinuing said depicting a consequence of selecting said first selectable item.

20. (Original) The method of Claim 18, further comprising:
third determining a position of said cursor; and

in response to said position of said cursor hovering over a second selectable item, depicting a consequence of selecting said second selectable item.

21. (Original) The method of Claim 17, wherein said consequence of selecting said first selectable item is displayed as an overlay transparency.

22. (Original) The method of Claim 17, wherein said consequence of selecting said first selectable item is displayed as a stencil outline.

23. (Original) The method of Claim 17, wherein said depicted consequence of selecting a first selectable item comprises displaying at least one of an inactive submenu, an inactive window, and an inactive dialogue.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Original) The method of Claim 17, wherein said consequence of selecting said first selectable item comprises a submenu.

26. (Original) The method of Claim 17, wherein said consequence of selecting said first selectable item comprises a subwindow.

27. (Original) The method of Claim 17, further comprising:

in response to a selection of said first selectable item, displaying at least one of an active submenu and an active window.

28. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 17, wherein said hovering over a first selectable item comprises said cursor remaining in an area corresponding to said first selectable item for at least a first predetermined period of time.

29. (Original) The method of Claim 17, wherein said computational component comprises a computer readable storage medium containing instructions for performing the method.

30. (Original) The method of Claim 17, wherein said computational component comprises a logic circuit.

31. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for displaying a consequence of a selection to a user, comprising:

means for visually displaying;

means for receiving user input;

means for determining a position of a cursor, wherein said cursor is displayed by said means for visually displaying and is responsive to said means for receiving user input;

means for determining a relationship between a position of a selectable item displayed by said means for visually displaying and said cursor; and

means for generating a depiction of ~~[[a]]~~ an actual consequence of actually selecting said selectable item at least when said cursor is within an area occupied by said selectable item on said means for visually displaying, wherein said selectable item is associated with an application program, wherein said actual consequence of selecting said selectable item performs an operation on a file that is open in the application program, and wherein said operation does not include opening a file.

32. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 31, wherein said depiction of a consequence of selecting said selectable item comprises displaying said consequences as a transparent overlay.

33. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 31, wherein said means for receiving user input comprises a pointing device.

34. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for providing a depiction of the consequences of making a selection, comprising:

data storage, wherein at least a first application is maintained in said data storage;
a data processor operable to execute instructions included in said first application;
a visual display operable to display graphical elements generated in connection with said execution of said instructions included in said first application and operable to display a cursor;
a pointing device operable to receive commands from a user concerning a position of said cursor with respect to said graphical elements, wherein a depiction of the actual consequences of actually selecting at least a first selectable item provided as part of an application and included in

said graphical elements is displayed in response to detecting that said cursor is hovering over said at least a first selectable item, and wherein ~~the~~ said actual consequences of selection said at least a first selectable item include an operation that is performed on a file that is open in said application and do not include opening ~~[[a]]~~ any file.

35. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 34, wherein said pointing device includes a button for receiving an indication of a user selection, and wherein said depiction of the consequences of selecting a selectable item is displayed in the absence of operation of said button.